

long ago, or the civic government would have had to resign.

The difficulty appears to be not so much conflicting ideas, as an absence of ideas. We hear now and then of aldermen expressing ideas of a negative order on the subject, that is of finding more or less reasonable objections to more or less unreasonable propositions, but of practical suggestions little is heard. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the public have a right to look to the aldermen for initiative action in this matter. For the discharge of such duties they were elected, for neglecting which they cannot escape responsibility while retaining their seats.

Some time ago the authorities of the Montreal General, Royal Victoria and Notre Dame Hospitals showed a willingness to take this matter off the hands of the Council upon reasonable terms. This was not agreeable to a majority of the aldermen and as a consequence the Council is still talking at intervals in a desultory fashion about sites and schemes for a Civic Hospital. That the several hospital boards could settle the matter promptly and satisfactorily we do not doubt and in the absence of any definite scheme for a civic hospital it is time for the Hygiene Committee to resume negotiations with the hospital authorities. They might at least ascertain upon what terms the three institutions would undertake the care of the city's patients.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The intention of the Grand Trunk Railway to extend its line to the Pacific Coast recalls the early projects which at length, after stormy episodes, culminated in the building of the Canadian Pacific. A complete history of that line would be a valuable contribution to Canadian literature. Foreshadowings of a road across this continent through British territories are found in official and private publications of a very early date. The word "Lachine" has in it an unconscious prophecy, for it arose from the early settlers regarding that locality to be on the highway to China, or La Chine. The Hon. Joseph Howe, in 1851, said there would be a line built from Halifax to the Pacific in the time of the generation then living. One was shortly afterwards projected. A British official, Captain Palisser, was sent by the Imperial Government to study the conditions from a railway point of view. He pronounced such a road impracticable. What is now Manitoba and the Territories he thought would be always isolated from eastern Canada and the western coast. An official offer of annexation was made to Canada baited with a promise to build a line like the C.P.R. and G.T.R. Pacific. The hook was too plain and distasteful.

In 1871 Sir Sanford Fleming reported that a line was feasible, and it was practically promised to British Columbia on entering Confederation. The "subsequent proceedings" were politically complicated and theatrical in their rapid transformations and personal disputes. The story is as exciting as a dime novel. Two Canadian Governments were upset as a result of quarrels over who was to build the road, or, who was to be its president. The Inter-oceanic company was organized and dissolved, as was another. The project was at last undertaken by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, with Mr. Van Horne as manager, under whom the line was very rapidly built and ever since has been operated with ever increasing success.

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It is remarkable that, within a few days of the Grand Trunk's movement being announced, there has been a discovery of what is reported to be the richest iron mining area in Canada, north of Sudbury, near to the route of the new Pacific road. Also, that in the same week a discovery is stated to have been made of an oil field in Ontario, that promises to have an exceedingly large output. To Canada the saying applies "To him that hath shall be given," the more her resources are developed, the greater are they found to be. The problem now is, how to materialize the natural riches of this country, and how to market them. Canada is combining the rapid growth of a gourd with the strength of a young oak. The next decade promises such a spectacle of rapid national development in this Dominion as will be one of the great phenomena of history.

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The "American Invasion of Canada" has become a popular phrase like "Made in Germany" was a few years ago. An English writer has written an article on this theme which shows how little he knows of the conditions existing in this Dominion. The inflow of emigrants from the Western States of America into Manitoba and the Northwest Territories is an "invasion" indeed, such as Canada has long invited, longed for and now welcomes. Another form of "invasion" is the transference of American industrial enterprises from the States to this country. Already there are large paper mills in operation in Canada worked by American capitalists, and several others are about being established.

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Mr. Bittering, United States Consul in this city, has named the following American enterprises as about being established in Canada: Gres Falls Paper Company, Canadian Steel and Coal Company, Federal